



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

The Workshop

A Monthly Journal, devoted to Progress of the Useful Arts

EDITED BY

PROF. W. BAUMER, I. SCHNORR AND OTHERS.

VOL. II.

Nº. 11.

DECORATIVE TREATMENT OF FRAMES, WINDOWS AND PANELS.

Any picture, whether oil or water-color painting, engraving or photograph, will either be greatly enhanced or materially injured by the frame which surrounds it. Mouldings, ornaments, the form and proportion of the frame will alike contribute towards making the picture, independently of its artistic value, appear more or less effective, according to the design and style of the work; just as a room will appear higher or lower according to the decorative treatment of the ceiling, walls and floor, which enclose it.

What has been said of pictures will also apply to any framed and panelled work and, in a certain sense, to doors and windows. For it is certainly not only the form and proportion of the opening, but also the treatment of the architectural frame of doors and windows which impart either grace, elegance and life, or repose, breadth and strength to the work. They mark the character of the whole building as well by the proportion of the number and size of openings to the massive walls, as by the structure and decoration of their frame.

But however true and important may be these principles, they are but too often infringed, because misunderstood, or not understood at all. Wherever we look, in picture and mirror frames, in panels and windows both in exterior and interior decoration, nay also, so far as they bear upon our subject, in the mounting and setting of fancy articles and objects for personal use, we find numerous aberrations from these rules, owing to a deficiency of thought and understanding. This is

the cause of so many inappropriate lines and forms, an injudicious application of mouldings, and an illegitimate and overcharged ornament and gilding, which we observe so often in works of this kind, and if we try hereafter to establish the leading features for the decorative treatment of frames, panels, windows, etc., we do so in order to counteract the swaying influence of ever-varying fashion, and to hold high in their place the dictates of common sense and good taste in art.

Whatever sort of frame we may consider, whether rich or simple, picture or mirror frame, whether made by the stone-cutter, cabinet maker or decorator, whether dating from the ancient Grecian, Roman, Mediæval, or Renaissance period, we find some points of similarity amongst all, some general principles from which we cannot depart.

The frame, serving the purpose to enclose and border some object, has naturally its characteristic importance not in itself alone, but rather in the enclosed work with which it is to produce a harmonious effect; in like manner as the handle, foot and lid of a well designed vase complete and relieve the bulbed part of the vessel. According to the above notion it must indeed be wrong to set off an insignificant or worthless picture by an overpowering richness of frame. It must on no account attract the eye in any illegitimate way thereby destroying the effect of general harmony and repose. The frame marks the picture or ornamental panel which strikes our eye, just as the window of our

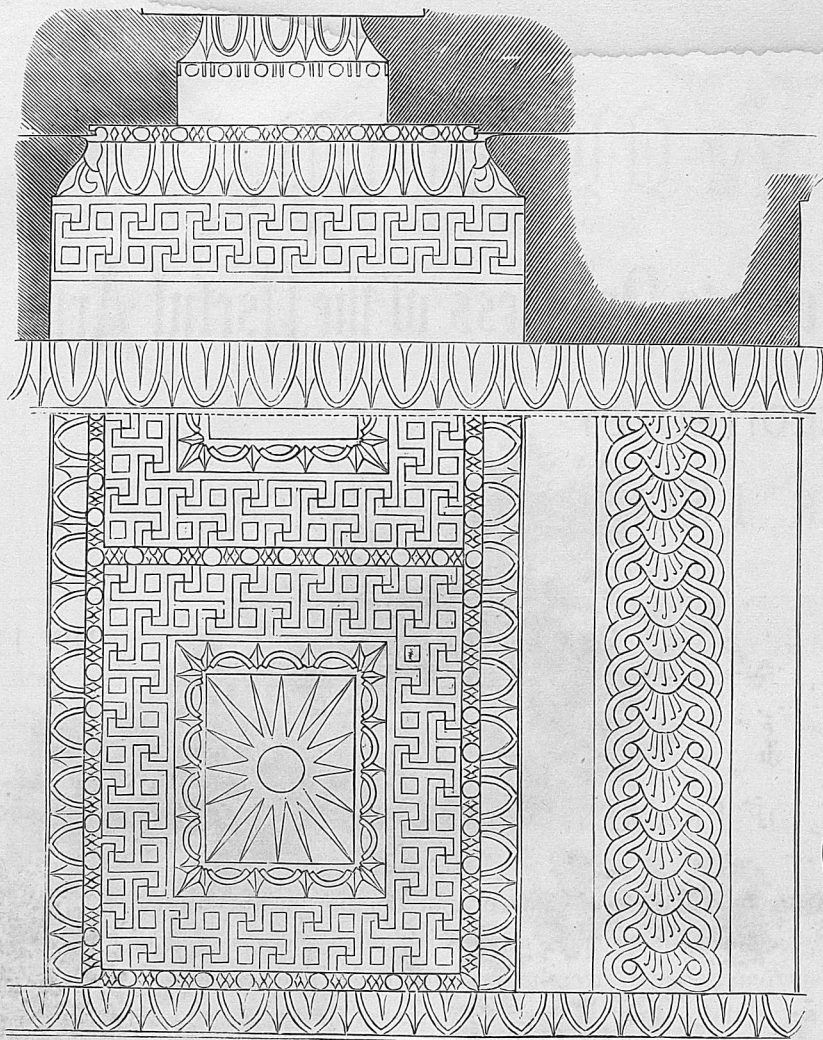


Fig. 1. Grecian Coffered Ceiling.

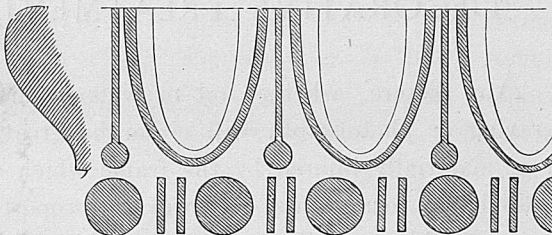
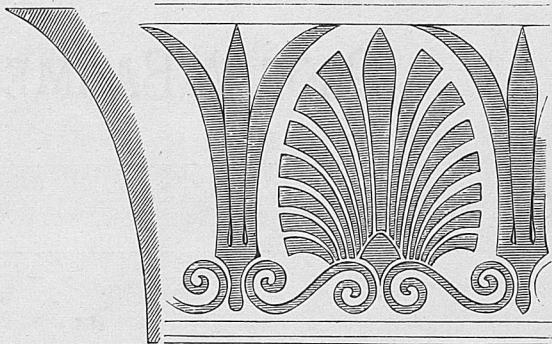
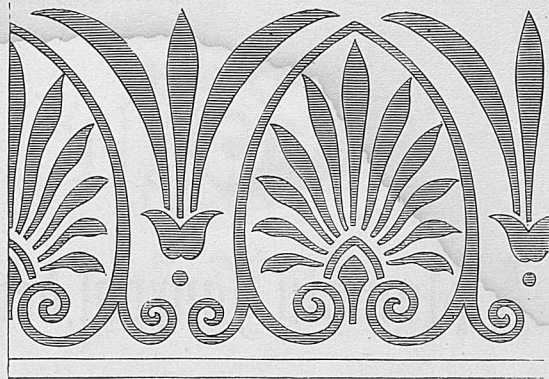


Fig. 2.

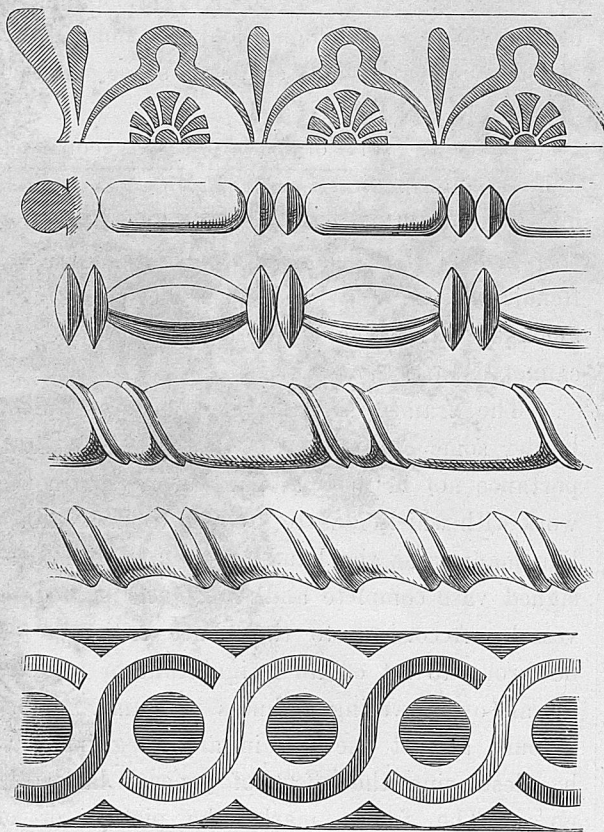


Fig. 2.

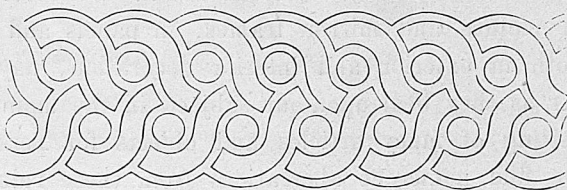
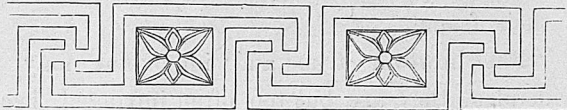
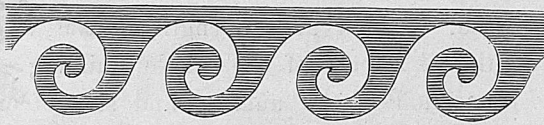


Fig. 2.

room encases the landscape outside. Picture or panel must recede from or be sunk in the frame-work either by means of the mouldings, by the effect of color, or by both together.

With reference to color it may generally be right to give to the frame or border a decided and light color and to choose for the ground of the panel, if not subject to other considerations, an airy, neutral tint from which figures and ornaments stand out very well as shown by numerous examples. But if the frame is white, or of bright metal, or hard polished wood, yellow and red may advantageously be used for the ground of the panel.

As for the mouldings and ornamentation of architectural frame-work, we give in fig. 1, a Grecian coffered ceiling, which is a typical example for ceiling decoration of all periods. We have here a series of bands, mouldings and supporting members for the coffered ceiling, or, considered in another point of view, a combination of frames for the panelling. Independently of the characteristic expression of supporting the roof, exhibited by these beams in form and decoration, they mark also by their intersections the sunk panels or coffers, and we are therefore perfectly authorized to employ all the running, conventional ornament, typical of bands and border patterns, such as frets, meanders,

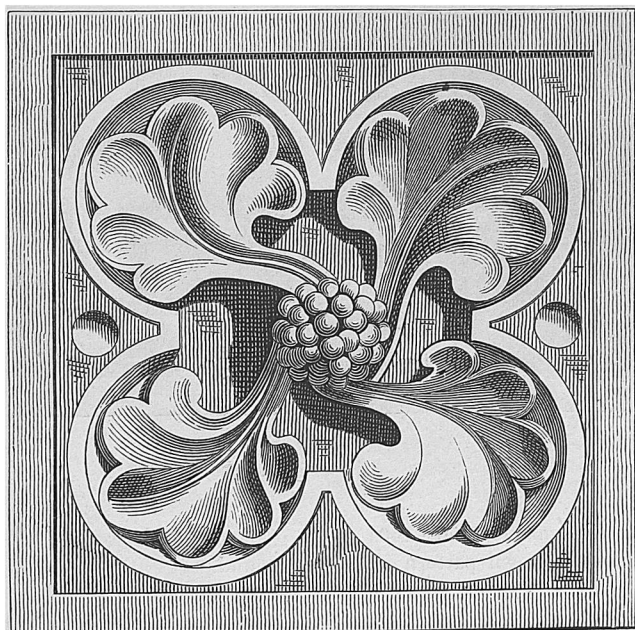
etc., in short all those decorative motives which, originally borrowed from textile fabrics and embroideries, have been imported by the ancient Greeks and Romans to be ever since employed in monumental and industrial art.

It will not be forgotten however that this ornament, surrounding and bordering the panel in parallel bands, must diverge from the centre, the egg and dart ornament, leaves and other enriched mouldings being set with the ends towards the centre and never the reverse. (*Fig. 2 and detail A of Supplement.*) The same is true with regard to cornerpieces, clasps and other ornamental features which may enrich prominent parts of the frame. Especially figures, representations of animals etc., if combined with the conventional ornament and enriched mouldings of the frame-work must always stand upright.

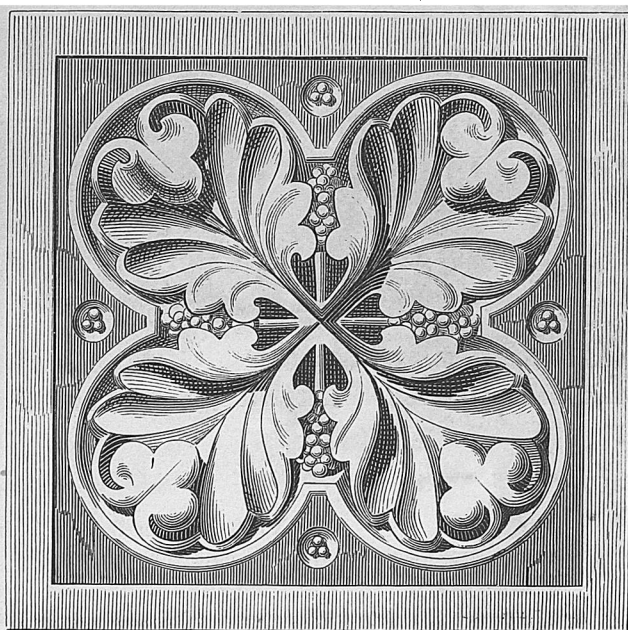
In addition to the foregoing remarks, and before considering the form of the frame, we may point out, that the more the eye is led to the contemplation of the panelled or framed work, the more this will show the effect of a picture, the better and the more successful will be the frame itself.

The conclusion in our next.

SPECIMENS OF ORNAMENTATION.



No. 1.



No. 2.

Nos. 1 and 2. Romanesque Style. Panels from the Porch of Seez Cathedral. Thirteenth century.